NOT COOL

Bob Dylan at 40? Not cool.

Gray hair? Not cool.

Wrinkles? Not cool.

A tattoo that was something

entirely different before

sagging skin took it over? Not cool.

High blood pressure? Not cool.

Erectile dysfunction? Not cool.

Partial dentures? Not cool.

Full arch support? Not cool.

Conversations

about A1C levels? Not cool.

Low metabolism? Not cool.

People calling me "sir"? Not cool.

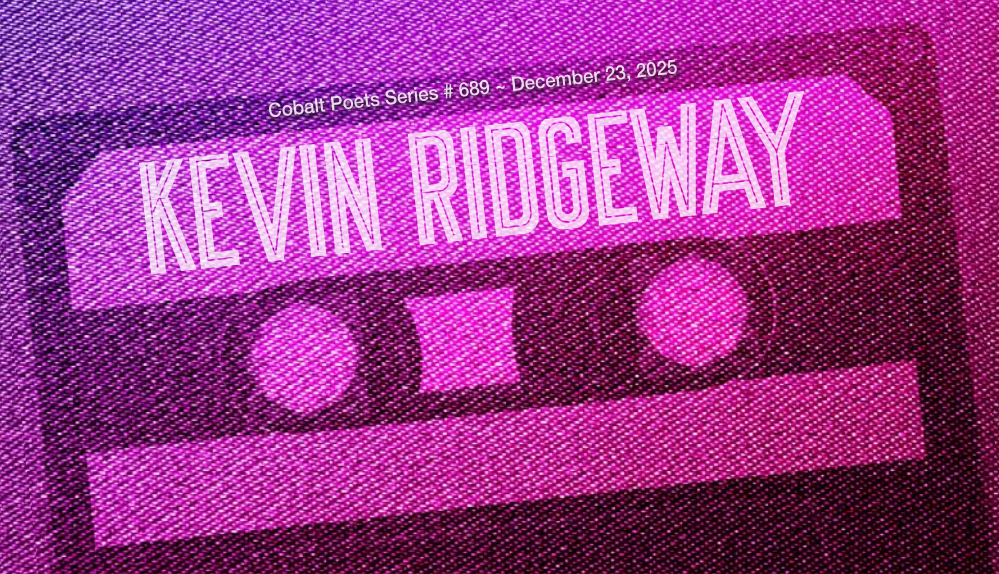
Poems about middle age? Not cool.

Being able to school youngsters

when and where appropriate

to my obvious satisfaction? Not cool.

This poem? Not cool.



Kevin Ridgeway is the author of *Too Young to Know* (Stubborn Mule Press, 2019), *Invasion of the Shadow People* (Luchador Press, 2022) and *Death of the Coppertone Girl* (Luchador Press, 2025). His work has appeared in *Hiram Poetry Review, New York Quarterly, Paterson Literary Review, Gargoyle, Slipstream, Chiron Review, Nerve Cowboy, Heavy Feather Review, San Pedro River Review* and *Trailer Park Quarterly*, among others. A Pushcart and Best of the Net nominee, he lives and writes in Long Beach, CA.